**Teaching Reading in the Elementary and Middle School**

**Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey – Graduate School of Education**

**Fall 2012, Course 05:300:495**

**Instructor:** Nicole Pepe and Darlene Prott - Literacy Consultants

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**Office Hours**

By Appointment – Before and After Friday Sessions (9:50-12:50)

**Wiki Website**

<http://fall12lited48.wikispaces.com/>

**Required Text**

* Tompkins, G. E. (2009). *Literacy in the middle grades: Teaching reading and writing to fourth through eighth graders* (2nd ed.). Boston: Pearson. (ISBN: 978-0132348492)

**Other Required**

* One children’s or young adult novel published since approximately 2004
* One professional book from a list provided in class for your professional discussion group (PDG)

**Additional course materials,**

* A variety of required readings in the form of PDF files, websites, online texts, etc. will be available through the Rutgers library system and/or from your course instructor.
* Common Core English Language Arts Standards
* New Jersey Professional Standards for Teachers and School Leaders

**Communications & Announcements:**We will update our class wiki each week to post information or supplemental resources. In addition, the wiki will post online assignments for the weeks we will not be meeting in person. The Wiki will be our online collaborative medium. To reach us directly, email is the preferred method. We will collect emails and create a class contact list for disseminating time sensitive information. We are flexible and willing to meet in person, either before or after the course, by arrangement.

**Course Overview**

This course serves as an introduction to the teaching of literacy in the upper elementary and middle school. The major focus of the course will be literacy instruction in grades 3 through 8 with some discussion of literacy learning at other levels. Throughout the semester, we will examine the ways in which the term “literacy” is constantly evolving in today’s society. In addition, we will explore the relationship between various areas of literacy, as well as the role of literacy across the curriculum. The course is designed to assist future teachers in developing the fundamental knowledge, skills/strategies and dispositions needed to carry out a literacy program where all students’ expertise in reading, writing and oral language is nurtured.

This course is grounded in the belief that students and teachers in a variety of settings have the advantage of working with—and learning from—people of varied cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The course is designed to prepare teachers for the responsibility of providing high-quality instruction to students who come to school having a wide range of literacy knowledge and experiences. As a part of this, we will explore instructional strategies necessary for teaching English language learners and struggling readers.

During each class session, we will explore research-based practices for building literacy in diverse learners. Classes will involve a variety of collaborative activities, such as discussing readings, examining curriculum/assessment materials, analyzing/developing lesson plans, participating in reading/writing workshops and other cooperative learning activities related to content and pedagogy. The instructor will also model lessons specially geared to grades 3 to 8 with an emphasis on higher order comprehension skills, vocabulary development, content area reading, expository writing and struggling readers. There will be an emphasis on exposure to upper elementary and adolescent literature.

**Course Goals and Objectives**

By the end of this course, each student should be able to:

* Articulate a philosophy of literacy instruction that emphasizes the interactive and integrative nature of language and builds upon these connections when creating learning opportunities.
* Demonstrate knowledge and skills that are needed for creating and implementing a literacy curriculum using small and large group work, collaborative learning, conferencing, and individual work based on professional standards.
* Identify, plan, and design literacy instruction based on students’ needs, developmental progress, learning styles and prior knowledge.
* Identify and understand the characteristics, uses, advantages, and limitations of different types of assessments for evaluating how students learn, what they know and are able to do, and what kinds of experiences will support students’ growth and development.
* Critically reflect on his/her teaching and learning.
* Identify and use available resources and materials for instructional planning.
* Articulate how educational research can be used as a means for continuous learning and development.

**Evaluation**

**Academic Integrity:** You can find the Policy on Academic Integrity for Undergraduate and Graduate Students at the following site: http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/. Academic integrity is essential to the success of the educational enterprise and breaches of academic integrity constitute serious offenses against the academic community. Every member of that community bears a responsibility for ensuring that the highest standards of academic integrity are upheld. Only through a genuine partnership among students, faculty, staff, and administrators will the University be able to maintain the necessary commitment to academic integrity.

The University administration is responsible for making academic integrity an institutional priority and for providing students and faculty with effective educational programs and support services to help them fully understand and address issues of academic integrity. The administration is also responsible for working with other members of the academic community to establish equitable and effective procedures to deal with violations of academic integrity. Violations of Academic Integrity include any involvement with cheating, the fabrication or invention of information used in academic exercise, plagiarism, facilitating academic dishonesty, or denying others access to information or material, and any violation may result in disciplinary action being taken at either the college or university level. Breaches of academic integrity can result in serious consequences ranging from reprimand to expulsion.

We will follow the policy strictly. It is expected that you comply with standards of academic integrity in this course. If you need assistance in an assignment or course content, please seek assistance from your professor or other appropriate resources. Assignments should be your own work, except in cases where it is a group product. Any resources that are used to guide your thinking and/or written work should be appropriately referenced. The consequence for violating policies of academic integrity and other elements of the student code of conduct are serious.

**Assignments & Grading**

Middle Phase Unit Plan & Lesson Reflection 30%

Weekly Attendance, Preparation & Active Participation 20%

Literacy Investigation (including round table discussion) 20%

Profession Discussion Group & Workshop Presentation 20%

Book Talk 10%

*Grading Scale Grading Summary*

A = 90-100 A = Outstanding work

B+ = 87-89 B = Good work

B = 80-86 C = Satisfactory work

C+ = 77-79 F = Failing work (also stopped attending without withdrawing)

C = 70-76

F = 69 and below

**Feedback:** Once a grade has been given, you can choose to revise the assignment. I am also happy to give feedback and read drafts of assignments as long as you submit them at least one week before they are due. You will then be able to use my feedback to make revisions before the assignment is graded.

**Late Papers:** Any assignment that has not been given an approved extension and that is more than a week late can receive a failing grade. Unless arrangements are made in advance of the due date, late papers and weekly assignments willbe graded as such. It is your responsibility to keep up with assignments and due dates as posted on our syllabus and through our class wiki site.

**Turning in Assignments:** When turning in assignments, be sure to consider the following:

* Only work that meets professional standards will be accepted. As teachers, we are expected to clearly communicate information to parents, administrators, and colleagues. For this course, you are expected to hand in proofread work.
* Any assignment that has not been given an approved extension and that is more than a week late can receive a failing grade. Unless arrangements are made in advance of the due date, late papers and weekly assignments willbe graded as such. It is your responsibility to keep up with assignments and due dates through our class wiki site.
* Wiki will be updated each week to post information for your assignments. Check the site between classes so that you are aware of all announcements.
* We are happy to give feedback and read drafts of assignments as long as you submit them *at least one week before* they are due (or, for lesson plans, one week before they are taught). You will then be able to use the feedback to make revisions before the assignment is graded.
* Once a grade has been given, you can choose to revise the assignment. A revised assignment can receive a maximum of 95% of the assignment’s total points. In addition, we will only accept revisions *within a two-week period* after you receive your initial grade.

**Confidentiality:** When discussing classroom situations during course sessions, do so carefully. Mask the name of a student on any written or visual work shared in class or used in an assignment. When discussing teaching practices you have observed in the field, be mindful of maintaining a tone of professional courtesy. Under no circumstances (whether in class or in casual conversation with friends) should you relate stories from classrooms or schools that may be embarrassing to teachers or students or that include sensitive information about a child or family.

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| **Assignments & Grading**  More detailed information about each assignment will be available on Sakai. | |
| **Weekly Attendance, Preparation & Active Participation:** Your participation and attendance are necessary for you and your classmates to get the most out of this course. You are expected to ***attend every class*** session having completed all required readings. I do understand, however, that extenuating circumstances might result in an absence. If you miss class, use the university absence reporting website <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/> to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to me.Missing class time will result in lost points. For example, you will not earn full credit if you arrive late/leave early regularly, miss classes, or if you do not actively participate.  In-class activities that I use to inform my planning count toward your participation grade. Activities related to readings will take the form of written reflections, article discussion group work, participation in *Thinkfinity* discussions, Do-nows, station activities, etc. At times materials prepared outside of class will also contribute to this portion of your grade. | 20% |
| **Book Talk:** You will read an award-winning text appropriate for use in grades 3 through 8 and present a book talk. The book should be new to you and published since 2004 (unless special arrangements have been made). Examples of awards include the Newbery Medal, Pura Belpré Award, and Robert F. Sibert Informational Book Medal. (Other book awards can also be considered.) You will sign up to present a short (approximately 5 minute) book talk in class. ***Post the title and other required information on our wiki site by the end of week 3, September 21. Presentations will begin week 5, October 5.*** Sign-ups will be conducted through the wikispace. | 10%  Book Talk Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| **Cross-content Literacy Investigation Paper & Discussion:** The classrooms you will be visiting during the course of the semester will bring relevant practical learning opportunities to our course. We can identify both problems of practice, as well as highlighting success in our classrooms. As reflective teachers, you will actively connect your professional reading to what you see and do in the classroom. For this paper, you will write a detailed description of observed literacy learning/teaching, describe/explain your reaction, and connect to research/professional texts to support your analysis. For example, if you observe effective instruction, you could link to articles that help you to more deeply understand the rationale for the observed practice. If what you observe does not seem effective, you will link to research that suggests how you might do things differently. Once you have finished your paper you will share what you learned with a small group during a Roundtable Discussion*.* Note: In addition to course readings, you will cite at least two peer-reviewed articles located/read for this assignment (readings not required for GSE courses). | 20%  Draft Due Date:  10/12  (Round Table:  10/12)  Final Due:  10/19 |
| **Early Phase Unit Plan –** The Early Phase Unit Plan is a requirement for your portfolio and will be submitted to the Sakai Teacher Portfolio. You will complete and upload a unit plan in your area of expertise.  Templates, directions, rubrics, etc. will be provided during the course of the semester via class as well as under “assignments” on our class wikispace.  See the *sakai.rutgers.edu* website for more information. | 30%  Due Date:  11/16/12  Reflection Due Date:  11/30/12 |
| **Professional Discussion Group & Workshop Presentation:** You will participate in a professional discussion group (PDG) during the second half of the semester. This will include selecting a professional text to study (from titles introduced in class). Groups will be formed based on interest and you will have the opportunity to engage in dialogue and activities centered on the pedagogical and theoretical presentations of literacy instruction offered in the multiple texts. Upon completion of the experience, you will be asked to conduct a mini-workshop (no longer than 30 minutes). Recommended texts for your PDG groups will be posted on our wikispace and introduced in class. | 20%  PDG Workshop Date:  11/30  Or  12/7 |

**Tentative Schedule**

*Online Classes are indicated with the following:* **🖳🖰🖫**

*All assignments reflect the integration of national and state content standards, as well as professional teaching standards. Specific standards were listed with each assignment for this course. This is not to suggest, however, that unlisted standards are not addressed.*

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| ***Phase I: The research and theory that frame instruction in grades 4 through 8*** | | | |
| Class Session | Topic | **Readings Due** | Assignments Due |
| **Week 1**  **Sept. 7** | **Introduction -**  **Literacy in Our Lives:** *What does it mean to be literate? How is “literacy” defined?* *How might literacy take on different forms in different contexts?* | International Reading Association (2009). [*New literacies and 21st century technologies: A position statement of the International Reading Association*](http://www.reading.org/Libraries/Position_Statements_and_Resolutions/ps1067_NewLiteracies21stCentury.sflb.ashx)(IRA PS 1067). |  |
| **Week 2**  **Sept. 14** | **Literacy in the Middle Grades:** *How do literacy demands change as students move through the grades? How do effective teachers organize and plan instruction for learners in grades 3 through 8 and beyond? What does effective literacy instruction look like?* | Tompkins Ch. 1  Alvermann, D.E. (2005). Literacy on the edge: How close are we to closing the literacy achievement gap? *Voices from the Middle*, *13,* 8-14.  [Common Core Speaking and Listening (SL) Standards](http://www.corestandards.org/assets/CCSSI_ELA%20Standards.pdf)  <http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards/english-language-arts-standards>  Become familiar with Wikispaces and [Wiki tutorials](http://www.wikispaces.com/content/wiki-tour) | Literacy narrative- Post on Thinkfinity  Join our class wiki and create a profile |
| **Week 3**  **Sept. 21** | **Examining Reading and Writing Processes:** *What is the reading process? What is the writing process? What are the basic principles for planning and managing a literacy program?* | Tompkins Ch. 2  Executive Summary (pp. 3 – 5) of the following report:  Biancarosa, G., & Snow, C.E. (2006). [*Reading next: A vision for action and research in middle and high school literacy*](http://www.all4ed.org/files/ReadingNext.pdf)*. A report from Carnegie Corporation of New York*. Washington, DC: Alliance for Excellent Education.  Pages 3 – 24 of the following report:  Graham, S., & Perin, D. (2007). [*Writing next: Effective strategies to improve writing of adolescents in middle and high schools*](http://www.all4ed.org/files/WritingNext.pdf)*. A report from Carnegie Corporation of New York*. Washington, DC: Alliance for Excellent Education. | Order/borrow PDG Text |
| **Week 4**  **Sept. 28** | **Assessment and Evaluation:**  *How can teachers assess reading and writing? How can teachers use assessment to inform literacy instruction? How can teachers ethically prepare students for high-stakes tests?* | Tompkins Ch. 3 and related videos/websites  Dennis, D.V. (2009/2010). “I’m not stupid”: How assessment drives (in)appropriate reading instruction. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy, 53,* 283-290.  Moon, T. R. (2005). The role of assessment in differentiation. *Theory into Practice, 44*(3), 226-233. |  |
| **Week 5**  **Oct. 5** | **Differentiating Instruction:** *How do culture and prior experiences relate to literacy practices? How can teachers plan and implement literacy programs based on the needs of diverse populations of students?* | Tompkins Ch. 4 and related videos/websites  Ginsberg, M. B. (2005). Cultural diversity, motivation, and differentiation. *Theory into Practice, 44*(3), 218-225.  Yoon, B. (2007). Offering or limiting opportunity: Teachers’ roles and approaches to English Language Learners participation in literacy activities. *Reading Teacher, 61,* 216-225. | Share draft of observed teaching practices and provide feedback to peers for literacy investigation paper  Bring possible outside peer-reviewed articles |

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| ***Phase II: Powerful Teaching*** | | | | |
| Class Session | Topic | **Readings Due** | Assignments Due | |
| **Week 6**  **Oct. 12** | **Eliminating Obstacles to Fluency:** *What is fluency and why is it important? How can teachers help students to become fluent readers and writers?* | Tompkins Ch. 5  Ash, G., Kuhn, M., & Walpole, S. (2009). Analyzing "inconsistencies" in practice: Teachers' continued use of round robin reading. *Reading & Writing Quarterly*, *25*, 87-103.  Ivey, G., & Baker, M. I. (2004). Phonics instruction for older students? Just say no. *Educational Leadership, 61*(6), 35-39. | PDG  Meeting 1 | |
| **Week 8**  **Oct. 19** | **Promoting Comprehension—**  **Reader Factors:** *What theories inform reading comprehension instruction? How do good readers and writers comprehend texts?* | Tompkins Ch. 7  Tompkins 264-271 & 334-342 (Literature and Thematic Units)  McLaughlin, M., & DeVoogd, G. (2004). Critical literacy as comprehension: Expanding reader response. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy, 48*(1), 52-62.  PDG Chapter(s)  [Common Core Reading Literature (RL) Standards](http://www.corestandards.org/assets/CCSSI_ELA%20Standards.pdf) | \* Literacy Investigation Paper Due \*  \**Round Table Discussion*  PDG  Meeting 2 |
| **Week 7**  **Oct. 26**  **🖳🖰🖫** | **Expanding Academic Vocabulary:** *What are the stages of word knowledge? What are some techniques for teaching vocabulary?* | Tompkins Ch. 6  Blachowicz, C. L. Z., Fisher, P. J. L., & Ogle, D. (2006). Vocabulary: Questions from the classroom. *Reading Research Quarterly, 41*(4), 524-539.  PDG Chapter(s)  [Common Core Language (L) Standards](http://www.corestandards.org/assets/CCSSI_ELA%20Standards.pdf) | Online Assignments posted on wiki | |
| **Week 10**  **Nov. 2** | **Teaching Writing:** *How can teachers create an environment to support good writing? How do teachers approach spelling instruction in the middle grades?* | Tompkins Ch. 9  Handsfield, L. J., Dean, T. R., & Cielocha, K. M. (2009). Becoming critical consumers and producers of text: Teaching literacy with web 1.0 and web 2.0. *Reading Teacher, 63*(1), 40-50.  PDG Chapter(s)  [Common Core Writing (W) Standards](http://www.corestandards.org/assets/CCSSI_ELA%20Standards.pdf) | **\*** Early Phase Unit Plan Due  PDG Group #3 |

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| ***Phase III: Effective Instructional Programs*** | | | |
| Class Session | Topic | **Readings Due** | Assignments Due |
| **Week 9**  **Nov. 9**  **🖳🖰🖫** | **Promoting Comprehension—**  **Text Factors:**  *What are the unique text factors of fiction, nonfiction and poetry? Why is knowledge of text structure important?* | Tompkins Ch. 8 and related videos/websites  Pardo, L. S. (2004). What every teacher needs to know about comprehension. *Reading Teacher, 58*(3), 272-280.  PDG Chapter(s)  [Common Core Reading Informational Text (RI) Standards](http://www.corestandards.org/assets/CCSSI_ELA%20Standards.pdf) | Online Assignments posted on wiki    PDG  Meeting 4 |
| **Week 11**  **Nov. 16** | **Teaching with Trade Books:** *How do teachers choose and organize reading materials? What teaching procedures support comprehension of both online and offline texts?* | Tompkins Ch. 10  Saul, E.W., & Dieckman, D. (2005). Choosing and using information trade books. *Reading Research Quarterly, 40*(4), 502-513.  PDG Chapter(s) | PDG  Meeting 5 |
| **Week 12 Nov.21**  **🖳🖰🖫** | **Teaching with Textbooks:**  *How do teachers use required textbooks to meet the needs of students?* | Tompkins Ch. 11 and related videos/websites  Daniels, H., & Zemelman, S. (2003). Out with textbooks, in with learning. *Educational Leadership, 61*(4), 36-40. | Online Assignments posted on wiki  (*Textbook analysis)* |
| **Week 13**  **Nov. 30** | **Literacy Across Disciplines:** *What instructional techniques support reading and writing across the curriculum? How do students use reading and writing as tools for learning?* | Tompkins Ch. 12  Adams, T. L. (2003). Reading mathematics: More than words can say. *Reading Teacher, 56*(8), 786-795.  Wilson, A. (2008). Moving beyond the page in content area literacy: Comprehension instruction for multimodal texts in science. *Reading Teacher, 62,* 153-156. | \* PDG Workshop Presentations \*  \*Unit Plan Lesson Reflection Due |
| **Week 14**  **Dec. 7** | **Synthesis, Evaluation, and Application**: *What questions are still unanswered? Where do you go from here?* | Barone, D., & Wright, T. (2008). Literacy instruction with digital and media technologies. *The Reading Teacher, 62,* 292-302.  Blair, T., Rupley, W., & Nichols, W.D. (2007). The effective teacher of reading: Considering the “what” and “how” of instruction. *Reading Teacher, 60,* 432-438.  Other Articles TBA | \* PDG Workshop Presentations \* |